

## REPORTS FROM CONFERENCES

### **LIBER 2010 Conference, a confirmed success!**

At the end of June and at the beginning of July 2010, in Aarhus (Denmark), there was held the 39th annual conference of the League of European Research Libraries.

As expected, the impeccable organizing of the Scandinavians made this edition to be a remarkable success, both from the point of view of the participants and of the presenters and exhibitors.

The hosts were the Aarhus University and the State and University Library in Denmark. They provided to the participants with several amphitheatres and rooms for parallel works, modern conference equipments, as well as a prompt service for the organizing of coffee breaks. More than that, in the last evening, all the participants were invited to a dinner organized by the hosts of this event.

The special guests at this Conference were Clifford Lynch (Coalition for Networked Information, SUA), Heather Morrison (Simon Fraser University, Canada), Lee Dirks (Microsoft, USA), Jon Orwant (Google, USA), and Brian Lavoie (OCLC, USA).

Clifford Lynch, who is a member of the National Digital Preservation Strategy Advisory Board of the Library of Congress (USA), a member of Microsoft's Technical Computing Science Advisory Board, a member of the board of "New Media Consortium", made a presentation on the theme "The future arrives: scholarly practice, scholarly communication and the roles of libraries". Under this theme, he presented the notable changes undergone by the current academic practices and especially the manner of documenting and presenting the academic research. Then he came up with a series of solutions that research libraries can adopt to cope with these changes.

Heather Morrison made a presentation on the theme "The role of the research library in an emerging global public sphere". Under this theme, a real controversy was started about the role of libraries in the development of a global public, attracting both for and against opinions (sometimes fierce) related to her opinions. Heather Morrison is a well-known advocate of the

Open-Access movement, a Project Coordinator at the British Columbia Electronic Library Network and the author of the book entitled “Scholarly Communication for Librarians”.

Jon Orwant is the Engineering Manager at Google Books, Magazines and Patents, but also a well-known author of computer programming books. Before being appointed in this position, he was a CTO at O'Reilly & Associates and a Director of Research at France Telecom. His presentation, called “Deriving the library from first principles” brought into discussion the physical role of libraries (infrastructure, buildings) given the new conditions of electronic access to documents (from libraries, from home, from work, from a coffee shop). Although very interesting, his presentation only provided the point of view of an IT engineer, without generating a wide debate offering the viewpoints of librarians, too.

Lee Dirks made a presentation called “The next generation scholarly communication ecosystem: implications for librarians”. In his talk, he foresaw a growth in the speed with which scientific innovations will generate a real impact within libraries, in the next 3 – 5 years. Although he made an analysis of the opportunities brought along by these innovations, Mr. Lee Dirks wanted to emphasize that they will not come true unless the librarian profession undergoes a continuous process of transformation and specialization. Lee Dirks is Director of Education & Scholarly Communication in Microsoft's External Research division, a collaborator of the National Science Foundation in the USA, and also an adjunct faculty at the iSchool at the University of Washington.

Brian Lavoie is a scientific researcher at OCLC and has worked in various organizations as a library collections analyst, bibliographic controller, digital preservations coordinator, etc. His talk, “Sustainable Economics for a Digital Planet: Ensuring Long-term Access to Digital Information” was based on the conclusions of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Sustainable Digital Preservation and Access report, published at the beginning of this year, coordinated by Mr. Lavoie.

The Conference was held in plenary sessions, represented by the presentations made by the special guests, in “MCs / Master Classes” and in parallel sessions, each participant being invited to express his/her opinions even before the start of the event. The thematic seminars had the following subjects of discussion:

1. MC 1 presented by Chris Pressler (University of Nottingham, UK) and by Andy McGregor (JISC, UK): “How to market universal knowledge?”,

2. MC 2 presented by Paul Ayris, Martin Moyle (University College London, UK), Susan Copeland (Robert Gordon University, UK), Miguel Codina, Anna Rovira (Technical University of Catalonia, Spain), Iva Horova (Academy of Performing Arts, Czech Republic), Rachel Hill (Dublin City University, Ireland): “Managing electronic theses”,
3. MC 3 presented by Birger Larsen (Royal School of Library and Information Science, Denmark) and Kurt de Belder (Leiden University, The Netherlands): “The transition in libraries”,
4. MC 4 “LIBER YEP!” presented by Eric den Heijer (consultant, The Netherlands): “YEP!?: Starting a network for Young European Professionals in libraries”.

Personally, I participated at the seminar called “Managing electronic theses”, choice I have made as a consequence of the increased interest we can observe in Romania, too, regarding this theme and collaterally, of the interest for institutional digital repositories.

During this seminar, Ph.D. Paul Ayris presented the agenda of the LERU - League of European Research Universities for the passage to Open Access towards information. In his presentation, 6 important steps on this agenda could be distinguished:

- The set-up of an “Institutional Digital Repository”
- The establishment of a strategy for supporting open access (at an administrative level within a university, but also at the individual level of Professors, researchers and students)
- The clear establishment of the open access politics: Green Route or Gold Route
- The inclusion of the Agenda for open access in the pan-university strategies on the 3 plans: education, copyright, publishing/communication
- The consolidation of the own open access activity by the declaring of an Open Access Mandate
- The cooperation with regional, national and international institutions for avoiding the doubling of efforts (the publishing of the same works, the creation of meta-data, etc).

The second presenter was Mr. Martin Moyle, from the UCL Library in London, who discussed about the advantages of the electronic publishing of Ph.D. Theses, in “open access” format. In his opinion, the most obvious advantages would be the possibility to make known the newest researches, to display the work and the findings of researchers even from the starting period thereof, to increase the social impact of universities, to encourage

collaboration between research and industry, the public visibility of works, which will discourage plagiarism, the possibility to spread the auxiliary materials connected to Ph.D. works, such as multimedia materials, complex data kits, etc.

On 24.06.2010, the Ph.D. Theses portal, DART-Europe (DEEP – “Dart-Europe E-theses Portal”) showed the following current status in terms of digits: 161,666 works in “open access” regime, 280 participating universities from 18 countries.

Another important presentation made during this seminar was that of Mrs. Susan Copeland from the Robert Gordon University in the UK, member of the NDLTD Board (The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations). After a brief history of this organization (based in 1987!), Ph.D. Susan Copeland drew attention on the fact that any European author has won until now the “Innovation award” granted annually by NDLTD, and that European countries should increase their effort to provide the electronic publishing of Ph.D. Theses and Master Papers! Among the resources provided free of charge by NDLTD to those who wish to initiate open access to information projects, we can enumerate: an ample guide regarding the initiation of a program for the publishing of electronic theses, information on digital preservation, detailed information about the metadata standards, information about the rights of ownership over electronic works, an ample bibliography regarding electronic Ph.D. theses.

During the same seminar, important works were also presented by Mrs. Anna Rovira on behalf of the Consortium of Universities of Catalonia, Spain, Iva Horova on behalf of the Academy of Performing Arts from Prague (an interesting case study regarding the integration of “non-text” Ph.D. Theses into the institutional digital repository) and Rachel Hill on behalf of the Dublin City University from Ireland.

The afternoon of the first day of the LIBER Conference brought a session of awards from the organization, granted this year to Ana van Meejen Silva and to Imke Limpens for the work “How serious do we need to be? Improving information literacy skills through gaming and interactive elements”, to Graham Stone for the work “Searching life, the universe and everything? The implementation of Summon at the University of Huddersfield” and to Jani Sassali for the poster “TOR – Toolbox of Research Information Literacy Guidance”.

The first day of the conference ended with 2 parallel sessions during which several works were presented, out of which we can notice the session of Mrs. Tamara Pianos from the German National Library of Economics, called “EconBiz – Meeting user needs with new technology”, an ample

study performed with the help of German students regarding the users' behavior in relation to electronic sources of scientific information, which revealed the following aspects:

What users want from an electronic information portal:

- simple search instruments which tolerate spelling mistakes;
- fast search and rapid finds;
- sorting finds in terms of their relevance;
- comprehensive collections of articles;
- the sources of the portal should include both books and magazines;
- direct access to information;
- finds filtering options.

What is that the users of such portal do not want?

- sorting of finds function of the data base they are found in;
- too complex work instruments;
- the necessity to check several data bases for the same theme;
- long portal use manuals;
- the necessity for individual authentication;
- long waiting times for the finds.

The second day of the LIBER Conference was dedicated to parallel sessions.

We were interested in the session presented by Mrs. Maria Cassella from the University of Turin, who presented the work entitled "Institutional repositories: an internal and external perspective of the value of IRs for the researchers' communities". The paper debated the issue of the implementation and financing costs for such a digital repository. The latest survey carried out by the Association of Research Libraries showed that in average, the expenses incurred for the initiation of such an instrument amount to approximately Euro 182,550, and the operational expenses will mount to approximately Euro 113,543 annually. These costs include the technological infrastructure necessary for implementation and maintenance, the procedures necessary for preservation and the support of certain value added services, the personnel costs and the shares costs for the Internet connection. Among the highest difficulties in implementing and maintaining an IR we noticed the difficulty of reaching a critical mass of scientific articles present in the IR so that it becomes efficient and the absence of instruments fit to measure the quality of an IR.

Another interesting parallel session was that of Ph.D. Christian Gumpenberg and of Ph.D. Juan Gorraiz from the University of Vienna, from the Bibliometrics Department, called "Going beyond citations – SERUM: a new tool provided by library network". After a brief presentation

of the bibliometric tools we dispose of nowadays, and of the scientometrics politics, where they are used most often, and after drawing attention on certain shortages in relation therewith, the two Professors proposed a new instrument to the audience, called SERUM, which is not based on measuring citations upon making evaluation of journals, but which is based on measuring the use of journal articles. Concretely, SERUM is designed so that it centralizes data about the downloads of articles and afterwards, it interprets them and forms a system similar to that which notifies the journal impact factor (the JSR system).

In the second part of the second day, the sponsors' presentations were made, who made known the latest novelties regarding preservation techniques of the digital contents, techniques used for reconditioning and preservation of printed books, new publishing issues and new journal collections platforms. In the evening, we were invited to a reception organized by the Aarhus City Hall, where we were able to admire a work of art by the famous architects Arne Jacobsen and Erik Møller. The building, inaugurated in 1941, has an architecture considered modern even in the present days and it is plated on the exterior with more than 6,000 square meters of marble brought from Norway.

In the first part of the third day of the Conference, the parallel works continued, and in the second part, the sponsors of this edition made their presentations. We noticed the presentation made by Mr. Ronald M. Schmidt from the Center for the Forming of Librarians from the North Rhine-Westphalian.

He approached a technical subject regarding the methods of consolidating the statistical data and the performance indicators (ISO 11620) of libraries, at European level. He stated that although there has been a way of access to the electronic scientific information resources for several years, the national statistics for access to information are very rare. Except for a few States, such as Austria, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, the rest of Europe does not store information in a standardized manner, in terms of access to electronic documents. In the end, he proposed to all the participants to analyze three projects concerning the monitoring of statistics and performance indicators: BIX (Bibliothekindex in Germany), UKB (Dutch project for library statistics) and HELMS (the UK Higher Education Library Management Statistics).

The sponsors' presentations were both interesting and interactive. Companies like ProQuest, Ebsco, OCLC, Ex Libris and others launched several debates on the future of libraries. The statements made by the Google representatives were special, as they announced that they intend to

digitize all the books in the world (currently around 120 million) and that they have already succeeded in completing over 12 million units. Another interesting point was the declaration made by the Microsoft representative, according to whom “we are not dealing with an information overload, but with a filter failure.

The evening of the third day ended with a reception offered by the Aarhus University and by the State and University Library in Denmark and with a visit to the Book Tower, a special part of this prestigious University.

Thus, one may confidently say that the 39th LIBER Conference was an event dedicated to the desire to reinvent libraries and that it has completely reached its purpose. The event, which was estimated to be successful even before its start was confirmed by the good organizing and collaboration between LIBER and the academic authorities within the Aarhus academic center.

We are looking forward for the anniversary conference in June 2011, which will be held in Barcelona!

*Tiberius Ignat*